

Love's Astronomy, fragment

AHMAD SALEH ABDULLAH

for SAP

When we dream of reality on yet unnamed moons
Do our dreams become just as untrue?
But I have felt the sand under my feet
And the warmth like you get on the beach.
I have felt the breeze hugging my chest,
The vapours condensing as sweat on my skin;
Nostalgia for a scent of a flower that you know on earth
but on a new moon seems like something else.
Fear grasped me. I felt homesick.
But soon the definition of home
Felt just as alien as the hypothetical rose.
I have seen two lovers on Uranus
Sitting by the ocean of diamonds.
I have seen the rings of Saturn on her fingers
And all his fear locked within Titan's heart.
But no star burns for us. No flower blooms
And kisses the air as I might've kissed you.
We are a nebulous cloud, nourished by the
Dust of the stars that burned before us.
We are a testimony that love never dies,
It travels through interstellar space
Hoping that someday it might bloom
Once again as the magnanimous sun.
[...]

Abdullah lives in a world as Finnegans Wake, roams through the dark alleys of Dostoyevsky's novels, and is always drunk on poetry like it's his Cutty Sark. Tell him Ça suffit at asab-dullah.ag@gmail.com



MY FIRST LOVE

TASFIYA HUSSAIN PRITHULA

Looking at the picture that his niece had drawn, Hillol let out a slight chuckle. The picture took him back to his old days. As a few moments of silence passed, Hillol was left staring at the sketch as if he was having a staring contest with that poor piece of paper. But the silence only lasted a few minutes, until it was broken by his niece who abruptly asked, "Uncle, how did you and Aunt Luna meet?" Hillol looked at his niece and all the children who were present there and saw their expectant faces.

At first Hillol hesitated, but a slight urge to speak up was stinging in his heart. He decided to answer the question, a question that he was always asked but chose not to answer. Deep inside, he was a little nervous, and he wondered to himself, "Where am I getting this courage?" He shrugged off these thoughts and finally started to confess.

It all started with one call. It was evening, the clock on the wall of the living room ticked to 7 o'clock. Hillol was sitting on the sofa, sipping his evening tea with a Humayun Ahmed book. Suddenly, the telephone on the tea table started to ring. Hillol huffed and closed his book and went to pick up the phone. He brought the speaker of the telephone to his right ear and after sighing he started the conversation with, "Hello! Who is this?"

After a few moments of silence he heard, "Come quickly to my house, pick me up, we are getting married."

He knew the person on the other end of the call. He knew her well, better than he knew anyone else. He knew the call was urgent, and he could tell he didn't have too much time. He only gave it a moment's thought, but he knew what he had to do. Without questioning anymore, he quickly left his home and went where he was needed. Where she was.

There he picked her up and again they set off, this time to the Kazi office. And after a few signatures,

some formalities, and a photo with smiling faces, they started a new phase of their life. Hillol himself couldn't believe what had happened, he looked at the beautifully dressed lady beside him who was now his wife.

As they were exiting the building, however, he suddenly realised something important. There was no way he could go home now. If he went there with his newly wedded wife, he had no idea how his family would react. But he could imagine it wouldn't be good. He did some quick thinking and decided to call his cousin and asked her to give them shelter for the night. Thankfully, his cousin was on-board, something that made him feel tremendous relief and happiness. He finally relaxed, and smiled.

A few days had passed, and Hillol found himself sitting at home, in the living room with a cup of tea in his hand once again. This time, however, it was made by his one and only wife. He entered a state of trance again, wondering how his life had changed so fast. How hard it was to convince his parents to accept his marriage, how the woman who was his sister's best friend became the centre of his life, how they playfully used to hang out when his sister was newly married. Those cautious dreams they exchanged with each other had finally come true.

"Yeah, that's it kids, that's how we met," he ended his real life story, finally finishing the answer to his niece's question. But he knew immediately that another question was going to be asked, as it always did, and he was right. Abruptly one of his nephew who was in his teens asked him, "Uncle will you not get married again?"

Hillol replied with a dry chuckle, "No dear, once was enough."

His nephew then again asked, "Why Uncle?"

Hillol was ready with his reply, "She was my first love, and until my last breathe she will be my first."

The writer is a class 9 student at Heed International School.